

National Plant Materials Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
Big Flats, NY Plant Materials Center
July 10-11, 2003

In Attendance:

Members:

Leonard Jordan, State Conservationist, Georgia (Co-Chairman)

Niles Glasgow, State Conservationist, Florida, (Co-Chairman)

Rich Sims, State Conservationist, Idaho

Ron Williams, State Conservationist, Michigan

Humberto Hernandez, Regional Conservationist, South Central

Others:

Gayle Norman, Policy Analyst, NRCS, Strategic Natural Resource Issues, Washington D.C.

Jon Hovanesian, CNPS, Inc., Milton, FL

Richard White, National Program Leader, Plant Materials, Washington D.C.

John Englert, PMC Manager/Acting PM Information Coordinator, Beltsville, MD

Jody Holzworth, Plant Materials Public Affairs Specialist, Boise, ID

John Dickerson, Plant Materials Specialist, Syracuse, NY

Martin van der Grinten, PMC Manager, Big Flats, NY

The meeting was chaired by Niles Glasgow

Important Dates:

August 29, 2003 – Due date for key contacts and supporters of PM. NPMAC will contact counterparts in their regions. Leonard and Niles will consolidate information and follow-up as needed.

October 9-10, 2003 – next NPM Advisory Committee meeting in Coffeeville, MS. Leonard Jordan will chair.

Review of Action Items from previous meetings

Name	Action Item Description	Status
Rick White/ John Englert	Prepare letter to send to STCs with copy to PMCs/PMSs asking for contacts and supporters for the PMC program	Progress stalled, action item deleted due to deciding on a different course of action. (DELETED)
Rick White	Send memo out to all PM staff letting them know that if deadlines for information are not met the STC will be contacted directly.	DONE - not really a problem anymore.
Jody Holzworth/ John Englert	Prepare Farm Bill fact sheet for internal NRCS use to describe how PM can help FOs work on Farm Bill.	DONE – will be distributed with next issue of Plants: A Growing Alternative newsletter
Rick White	The request for annual performance goals	Future item – September

Name	Action Item Description	Status
	should be sent to STCs with a cc: to PMCs in the future.	2003
Humberto Hernandez	Remind RCs at their next meeting of the need for state plant materials committees and to involve Regional Technology Specialists in PM committees and activities	DONE – Humberto will follow up with written reminder.
Humberto Hernandez	Will talk with Roger Hansen about participation and will discuss with Larry Clark issues with east region rep. Also discuss with Rick VanKlavern about replacement for Tom Jewett.	DONE - Ron Williams replaced Roger Hansen as Midwest Region representative on committee
Jody Holzworth	Work with American Seed Trade Association's communication staff to find out what their information needs are. Also see if we can display PM exhibit and/or make a presentation at their national meeting in June.	Contact made with ASTA. Too late for this year. Still needs to make contact to discuss information needs.
Niles Glasgow	Send out letter to all STCs (drafted by Jody), when the next eNewsletter is issued, encouraging them to pass on the newsletter to key audiences	Niles needs to revisit letter and complete
Niles Glasgow/ Leonard Jordan	Prepare letter to Ron Williams to request Dave Burgdorf take lead on Biomass proposal as well as request other STCs with selected PMCs or PMSs to participate in biomass	DONE
NPMAC	Provide comments on Farm Bill fact sheet back to Jody no later than May 15	DONE – deadline has passed
NPMAC	Provide comments on PM brochure back to Jody no later than May 15	DONE – deadline has passed
NPMAC	Provide comments on training session materials back to Jim Briggs by May 2	DONE – deadline has passed
Rick White	Assemble a team by May 30 to work through the logistics of preparing a biomass proposal for the 2004 solicitation	DONE – team named in minutes from July meeting
Rick White	Work with Gayle Norman to determine if PM is eligible as a research agency to participate in the biomass proposal	PM does conduct research; need formal letter
Rick White	Have bulletin issued reminding STCs of need for State Plant Materials Committees and to identify one plant materials contact per state	In progress – bulletin is underway
Rick White/ John Englert	Have NPM Technical Committee do a cost analysis and compare the cost of doing this from PMCs versus the cost to outsource	Will be discussed at NPM Technical Committee meeting July 29-31

Discussion on meeting agenda items:

Biofuels-Biomass Update (Norman/White)

- 1) PMC Proposal
 - a) Dave Burgdorf has received authorization to lead a team and team members have been assigned
 - b) Burgdorf wants verification that PMCs can do research and that PM is eligible to receive grant funding
 - c) In a briefing with the Chief, he suggested that even though PM might be a research entity, it might not be appropriate for PM to receive funds from an NRCS administered grant program. Chief wanted to seek other avenues of funding.
 - d) PM Biomass-Bioenergy team might be best to develop a white paper rather than full proposal to describe what PMCs can do in this arena. It would serve as a prelude to other sources of funding as well as a draft for the proposal.
 - e) PM Biomass-Bioenergy team: Dave Burgdorf, Dwight Tober, Rich Wynia, Ramona Garner, Joel Douglas, Mark Stannard, Jody Holzworth, Paula Jones (ID RC&D)
- 2) PM as research agency
 - a) Gayle Norman talked with Stu Shelton and PM does have the authority to do research – this needs to be received in writing for the program.
 - b) Additional research needs to be done to define “federal research agency” for the purpose of the grant program. This to be done by Gayle Norman, Merlin Bartz, and John Stierna.
 - c) **Action Item** – Rick will follow up with Gayle on research agency issue
 - d) **Action Item** – Rick work with NPM Technical Comm. on what the definition of “federal research agency” should be in context to the Plant Materials Program and forward to Gayle
- 3) 2003 Grant Proposal process
 - a) 2003 process under Mark Rey in Natural Resources. As soon as Undersecretary for RD is confirmed the program will transfer to RD.
 - b) 400 applications with about 15x the amount of money available
 - c) technical review complete. Programmatic review needs to be done. Award announcement in the fall
- 4) 2004 Grant Proposal process
 - a) DOE is administering grant process
 - b) Announcement for next cycle to be issued this fall.
 - c) **Action Item** – Gayle will e-mail to NPMAC some DOE biomass-bioenergy guidelines/research priorities.

Marketing efforts (Holzworth)

- 1) Overview of marketing efforts and emphasis on key audiences presented
- 2) E-newsletter
 - a) May/June issue distributed
 - b) Larry Clark would like future issues sent to all NRCS employees – Jody will prepare invite to subscribe to go along with teaser.
 - c) Upcoming issues – Jul/Aug-drought; Sept/Oct-agroforestry, Nov/Dec-grazing lands
 - i) **Suggestions**: include text to make sure the reader knows there are 26 PMCs serving 50 states and territories; also mentioned this is distributed 6x per year with features

from various regions each time. Include information on the picture used in the header.

- 3) Brochure – final copy distributed
- 4) Farm Bill Fact Sheet – completed, will be distributed with Plants: A Growing Alternative
- 5) Web site
 - a) Currently in process of being migrated to Phase II modernization guidelines
- 6) PM Program shirts and hats – in process of creating an order
- 7) PM Video – Jody working with Bob Stobaugh. Looking to getting additional footage and then editing in the fall.

PMC Security Issues (White)

- 1) Lack of Uniformity among PMCs – some deficiencies not noted
- 2) Costs
 - a) Current, incomplete estimate is well over \$2M
 - b) Not sure how this will get funded – should this be funded from central USDA sources?
- 3) **Action Item** – Update the current estimates to make sure it is complete. Leonard and Niles will take to the Chief for discussion at the next briefing
- 4) **Action Item** – Rick will provide security estimates to Diane, Larry and Carlos Henning

Program Concerns for PMC and PMS – Regional Meeting (White)

- 1) Budget – Staffing (shortages and decreases)
- 2) Lack of Plant Materials Specialists – MS, KY, TN, NC (in SE region)
 - a) **Action Item** – Humberto will follow up with appropriate RCs and STCs as needed.
 - b) **Action Item** – John Englert/Rick White will get complete to Humberto list of States and PMCs who do not have an associated PMS
- 3) Training of PM staff
 - a) **Action Item** – Rick set the wheels in motion to move the National PM Workshop/Training Session forward. Rich Sims will bring this up in next Chief's Advisory meeting July 23.
- 4) Update Strategic Plan, esp. in light of 2002 Farm Bill
- 5) Plant Materials Specialists and PMC Managers need to be more involved in reviewing or writing Practice Standards.
 - a) **Action Items** – Rick will discuss with Diane and Larry how best to convey this to RTCs and STCs and will provide follow up as needed.

Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) (White/Englert)

- 1) Status – Rick provided an overview of where we stand right now. PART materials were distributed to the committee.
- 2) Follow-up
 - a) Strategic Plan development – Need to fast track. Obtain guidelines from Kathy Gugulis' office. Look with a strategic planner with an operations-management background. Pull team together to develop a strategic plan with integrates PM Program's purpose and mission along with the NRCS Strategic Plan.
 - b) **Action Item** – Humberto Hernandez will contact RCs to see if there is a strategic planner able to help PM develop the strategic plan.

- c) **Action Items** – Rick White will update Diane and Larry on strategic plan development and PART. Rick will also contact Kathy Gugulis’ office to get input on program strategic plan development.
- d) **Comments:** look at other research organizations (government, universities) for strategic plans, cost of product development.
- e) Ron Williams will assist with Strategic Plan development.

NRCS Reorganization (Glasgow/Jordan)

- 1) Notes from Chief’s meeting
 - a) Centers and Institutes are being looked at and plans are underway to possibly consolidate technical expertise into 3 Regional Technical Support Centers (Portland, Ft. Worth, NC).
 - b) There will be some changes in NHQ management staff
 - c) Some management positions may become political appointees.
 - d) Creation of 3 Technical Centers may provide an opportunity to fill 3 regional Plant Materials Coordinator positions.
- 2) **Action Item** - Leonard Jordan and Niles Glasgow – prepare letter to Larry Clark and Tom Weber emphasizing that if Regional Technical Support Centers are created it is crucial that there be a Regional Plant Materials Specialist at each Technical Center.

New PMC in Nevada (Glasgow)

- 1) NPMAC recognizes the need for a new PMC in Nevada, only if it comes with new funding for establishment and for annual operations. Leonard and Jordan will brief the Chief with this support and suggested conditions.
- 2) Proposal was passed around
 - a) **Action Item** – John Englert will make copies and distribute to the committee.

National Training Meeting (Glasgow/White)

- 1) Outline of national meeting purpose and logistics (5/12/03) handed out and briefly discussed.
- 2) **Action Item** - Rick White - set the wheels in motion to move the National PM Workshop/Training Session forward, assume agency support.
- 3) **Action Item** – Rich Sims - Bring up National PM Meeting in next Chief’s Advisory meeting July 23.
- 4) **Comments:** Need to keep RCs and STCs in the loop for getting this on budget initiatives radar. Also have a plan B for funding in case CTA funding is not available.

Future Action Items (assigned at July 2003 meeting)

Name	Action Item Description	Status
<u>Agenda items from previous meetings</u>		
Jody Holzworth	Work with American Seed Trade Association’s communication staff to find out what their information needs are. Also see if we can display PM exhibit and/or make a presentation at their national meeting in June.	Contact made with ASTA. Too late for this year. Still needs to make contact to discuss information needs.
Niles Glasgow	Send out letter to all STCs (drafted by Jody), when	Niles needs to revisit

Name	Action Item Description	Status
	the next eNewsletter is issued, encouraging them to pass on the newsletter to key audiences	letter and complete; Jody sent new letter to Niles;
Rick White	The request for annual performance goals should be sent to STCs with a cc: to PMCs in the future.	Future item – September 2003; SOON TO BE DONE - Bulletin is in progress to request performance goals
Rick White	Work with Gayle Norman to determine if PM is eligible as a research agency to participate in the biomass proposal	PM does conduct research; still need formal letter
Rick White	Have bulletin issued reminding STCs of need for State Plant Materials Committees and to identify one plant materials contact per state	In progress – bulletin is underway
Rick White/ John Englert	Have NPM Technical Committee do a cost analysis and compare the cost of doing laboratory analysis work from PMCs versus the cost to outsource	Will be discussed at NPM Technical Committee meeting July 29-31; Survey of needs completed, analysis underway
<u>New agenda items</u>		
Gayle Norman	E-mail to NPMAC some DOE biomass-bioenergy roadmap/guidelines/research priorities.	DONE
Humberto Hernandez	Follow up with appropriate RCs and STCs as needed to address the lack of Plant Materials Specialists in some areas	
Humberto Hernandez	Contact RCs to see if there is a strategic planner able to help PM develop the strategic plan	DONE – John Dondero working with PM
John Englert	Copy and distribute to NPMAC proposal for the new Nevada PMC	DONE
John Englert	Get complete list to Humberto of States and PMCs who do not have an associated PMS	Englert forwarded list to White 7/16/03
John Englert	Send list of NPMAC committee members and advisors to everyone on the committee.	List is being updated
Niles Glasgow and Leonard Jordan	Take PMC Security Assessment information to the Chief at the next briefing.	
Niles Glasgow and Leonard Jordan	Charge the Biomass-Biofuels team to start outlining the proposal and establishing possible partnerships. Prepare letter with expectation and timelines.	DONE
Niles Glasgow and Leonard Jordan	Take updated and complete estimate of what is needed for security needs at PMCs to the Chief for discussion at the next briefing	

Name	Action Item Description	Status
Niles Glasgow and Leonard Jordan	Prepare letter to Larry Clark and Tom Weber emphasizing that if Regional Technical Support Centers are created it is crucial that there be a Regional Plant Materials Specialist at each Technical Center	
NPMAC	Committee will contact counterparts in their regions to key contact information from key supports of PM. Leonard and Niles will consolidate info and provide follow-up. DUE August 29, 2003. Need to collect full contact info: Name, address, phone, fax, e-mail.	
Rich Sims	Bring up National PM Meeting in next Chief's Advisory meeting July 23.	
Rick White	Have NPM Tech Comm or Biomass-Biofuels team prepare white paper on what PM can do with biomass-bioenergy issues (use budget initiatives as a base). Use this as springboard for preparing the proposal. Jody Holzworth to assist.	Significant progress made; white paper has been drafted; biofuels committee has been having regular discussions.
Rick White	Work with NPM Technical Comm. on what the definition of "federal research agency" should be in context to the Plant Materials Program and forward to Gayle	NPM Tech Comm has drafted a statement, needs to be sent forward
Rick White	Rick will follow up with Gayle on research agency issue	
Rick White	Discuss with Diane and Larry how best to emphasize to RCs and STCs the need for PMS/PMC to provide reviews of plant related National and State Practice Standards. Provide follow up as needed.	
Rick White	Set the wheels in motion to move the National PM Workshop/Training Session forward.	DONE – progress is being made
Rick White	Update Diane and Larry on strategic plan development and PART. Also contact Kathy Gugulis' office to get input on program strategic plan development	DONE – Strategic plan is in progress, Kathy's office has been involved
Rick White	Provide summarized security estimates to Diane, Larry and Carlos Henning	Incomplete summary provided; still waiting on some figures